

A STUDY ON QUALITY OF WORK LIFE AMONG EMPLOYEES OF SELECTED IT COMPANY IN HYDERABAD

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the quality of work life of employees working in Information Technology based companies. It tries to determine the role played by the methods and procedures of Work Life Balance in organizational success. It is now generally accepted that quality of human capital and its capabilities is critical to the success of an organization. An individual's role in the family has undergone radical change and hence it is imperative that work and life be balanced accordingly. Thus, Quality of Work Life has assumed much significance. Thus, it is in the interest of organizations to include Work-Life Balance programs as an organizational initiative. Organizations are open to embracing such initiatives to enhance the capabilities of their employees.

This study attempts to interpret the Work-Life Balance program being followed in a selected IT company in order to determine further improvements in aspects of working conditions so as to enhance flexibility in work. The study was conducted using primary and secondary data sources which include questionnaire, interview for primary data and Company website, Company manuals, journals, records and books. The analysis concluded that the organization needs to further adopt employee-friendly procedures and facilities and provide the same to its employees in order to enhance the Quality of Work Life Balance.

KEYWORDS: *Quality of Work Life, Flexible Working Hours, Job Satisfaction, Family Satisfaction, Turbulent Business Conditions & Software Companies*

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INTRODUCTION

Quality of Work Life (QWL) considers the human dimensions alongside the technical and economic aspects of work. This seeks to achieve greater organizational effectiveness through enhancement of human dignity and growth, wherein stakeholders in the organization come together and design such workable improvements which help to better achieve the goals of the organization.

Thus, QWL improvements involve the creation of a working environment that is humane, and which makes it more involving, satisfying and effective to work in by considering the needs and development of the employees in the organization.

Rationale for the Study

The extent to which managers recognize QWL and its potential advantages and disadvantages defines an organization's approach towards employee's efficiency. No organization in this world of globalization would survive without taking care of our quality of work. It is the duty of the management to critically evaluate the benefits of Quality of Work life in their organization. Thus it is imperative that management should embrace

initiatives that enhances workforce diversity. Hence, with the good Quality of Work Life for employees, the organization would become internally and externally competitive.

Scope of the Study

This study focuses on the quality of work life of employees working in Information Technology based companies. This study looks at aspects of company initiatives to make working environment humane and flexible and how the approach to work brings about enhanced capabilities and efficiency in the working of the employees.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To know the various initiatives taken towards enhancing Quality of Work Life in a selected IT companies at Hyderabad.
- To assess the impact of Quality of Work Life initiatives on the efficiency and effectiveness of the employees
- To determine gaps that can help improve the Quality of Work Life
- To suggest improvements in work processes to improve the Quality of Work Life

Research Methodology

The study uses a research design which is partial exploratory and descriptive. A sample of 100 employees were randomly selected from top IT companies based in Hyderabad. The companies include IBM, Wipro, Mahindra Tech and Infosys.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Globalization has brought forth a number of challenges including intense competition. Faced with this, organizations and employees are compelled to face uncertainty, rapid changes and ever-increasing complexities, thus causing severe distress. In order to retain the competitive edge, organizations are thus compelled to evolve rapidly and devise imperatives to bring about a balance between work and family life of its employees.

In the face of such a scenario, QWL philosophy offers a framework for human development and enrichment to balance work and family life within the scope of organizational objectives. However, it is essential that further specific studies are done in order to unearth as yet unidentified aspects in relation to human behavior, workforce relationships, workplace efficiency and family life balance.

World-over, IT and software development companies provide the central infrastructure for the functioning of an organization. India has been at the forefront for rendering IT and allied services and is poised to play a bigger role in future. Highly competent professionals and cost-competitiveness play a major role in the growth story of Indian IT companies. As such, Indian software companies have evolved from software development to becoming one-stop solution providers to a number of large giant companies across the world.

The varied exposure and opportunities to study about and deal with such global giants has also enriched the competencies of Indian software professionals on various fronts including analysis, design, problem-solving, scaling and seamless integration across various platforms. This has led to heightened aspirations of the professionals which are becoming more and more demanding. Many companies feel that the expectations of Indian software professionals are

becoming increasingly unrealistic and which cannot be sustained in the long-run. This development may eventually lead to affecting the cost-competitiveness and companies may be forced to miss out on business opportunities. Realising this disturbing trend, many Indian IT companies are paying attention to enabling a humane environment in the workplace which may provide a way to remaining competitive.

Organizations are aware of the importance of valuable human capital as the most important asset in order to be a dynamic, growing and leading organization. As such, all initiatives that can enhance the workplace efficiency in the face of global challenges and changing family roles need to be implemented in an organization. The need today, is of formulating such a strategy in order to enhance the Quality of Work Life (QWL) that will satisfy both the employee needs and organizational objectives.

This study explores the various challenges and issues related to work-life balance, in respect of the above context.

The following case discusses the importance of having effective quality of work life practices in organizations and their impact on employee performance and the overall organizational performance. An established IT company presents a picture as given below:

The IT Company selected is into software development and IT applications across multiple domains. Its technical expertise lies in J2EE and .NET platforms. It has also developed applications for Knowledge Management, E-Governance, Electronic Media, Supply Chain, and Enterprise Resource Management. It is fully equipped with all relevant software, hardware, internet connectivity and supporting infrastructure. It has a proactive Training and Development programme which has partnered with Sun Systems, Microsoft and IBM. It also conducts in-house training sessions.

The work environment is designed to foster creativity and provides flexibility and skill development. A number of employee need focused options such as flexi-work timings, work from home option, continuing professional education, and community work provides the crucial space needed to enrich themselves. Work objectives are adhered to by following an approach of setting own targets and synchronizing schedules. All employees work within broad and flexible boundaries. Employees are exposed to all aspects of the problem at hand viz., user, design and development, implementation and application sides, thereby enriching their experience as well as broadening their understanding of the whole process and problem. Employees also develop an appreciation of the various aspects of functional roles and exhibit a higher degree of involvement in the whole project. Further the company also offers equal opportunity, recognition of merit and empowerment of employees irrespective of level, experience and background.

The current business scenario is of intense competition and has led to a significant increase in work diversity, pressure, and crashed delivery schedules. This has led to a substantial increase of pressure on the performance and quality of output of the individual and is accompanied with a multitude of problems – both professional and personal. Being able to create a balance between the employee's work life and family life has become all the more vital to achieving the balance in work life. Organizations are thus, giving utmost importance to work-life balance to get the best out of their employees. The younger generation suffers from various stress-related problems and in most cases the cause could be attributed to health. The cause of stress could be imbalanced work life balance.

Quality of Work Life is an evolving but crucial area contributing to organizational success. Research in this area is relatively new and all such studies conducted will help to build up on the academic literature as well as suggest more effective solutions. It is obvious that the individual, the organization and the society stand to gain.

This study is conducted to enquire into such factors that affect work-life balance, its impact and to explore ways and means to attain a greater degree of balance in work-life. This study is important in the present day context as that would facilitate to focus on optimum balance between work and life since adverse work-life balance policies can distress business performance in a number of ways.

From the studies already conducted on work-life balance, it has emerged that organisation stand to benefit in a number of ways with the adoption of effective work-life policies and competitive compensation packages. The numerous benefits entail diminished costs, higher employee retention, increased productivity, reduced stress, enriched work environment and higher profitability to the organisation.

However, attaining such conflicting goals is a disruptive task and calls for keen insight into current work-life situation.

Employees have multiple roles to play accompanied with varied and competing responsibilities such as housework, spouse care, child care, elderly parent care, community work, personal development and recreation. Balancing these multiple roles and responsibilities places high levels of stress on the individual, his family and the community as also impacting the employer negatively.

A major study conducted by Lowe (2005) in Canada revealed that 1 in 4 employees experience high levels of conflict between work and family, based on work-to-family interference and caregiver strain. Further, it also showed that if role overload is included in the study, the close to 60% of the employees surveyed experience work-family conflict.

In another study by Duxbury and Higgins (2007), it was found that women were more likely than men to report higher levels of role overload and caregiver stress. This occurred due to women devoting more hours per week to non-work activities. Women also experienced less spousal support for their careers than men. Further, 1 in 4 Canadians reported that work responsibilities interfered with the ability to fulfil home responsibilities. The study concludes that work-life conflict has increased potential for negative implication on family life.

A general understanding from the various studies conducted so far has revealed that the new generation of employees who face long hours of work, 24X7 connectivity, multiple time-zones collaboration and other such complexities of globalisation are now demanding changes to their work regimen from their employers. Similarly, the older generation are putting in longer working hours and are demanding different work arrangements suitable to their age and lifestyle.

The problem is compounded with the high female labour force, single parent families, dual-earning families and elderly care.

The combined effects of such conditions is becoming increasingly negative and hampering employees' abilities, competencies and potential to harmonise his work and family life. It has also led to numerous health related effects such as increased smoking, alcohol intake, weight gain, insomnia, depression, increased levels of BP and several complex neurological problems.

DATA ANALYSIS

Experience in the Current Organization

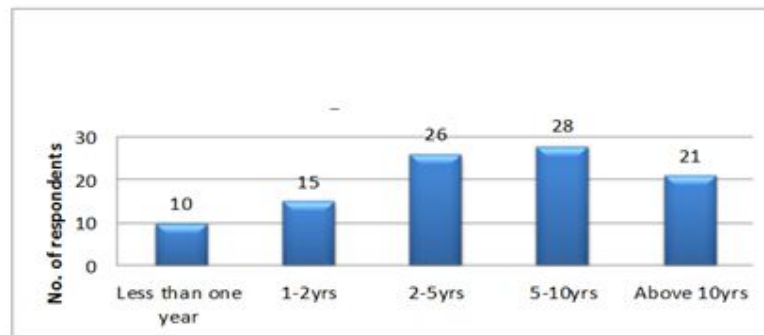


Figure 1: Experience in the Current Organization

Interpretation

According to the Figure 1, majority of the employees (75) are having experience above 2 years while the remaining 25 employees are having less than 2 years experience.

MOTIVATION IN THE WORK ENVIRONMENT IN YOUR ORGANIZATION

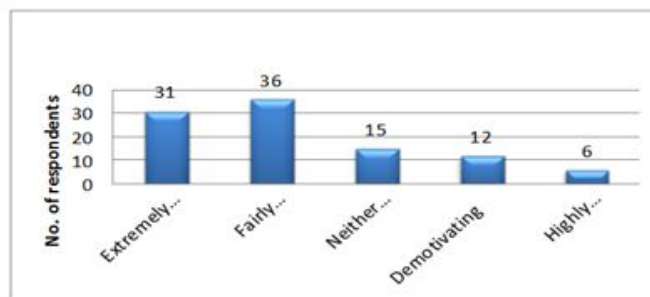


Figure 2: Work Environment

Interpretation

According to the Figure 2, work environment was found extremely motivating by 31 respondents, fairly motivating by 36 respondents, not motivating by 18 respondents. 15 respondents did not state work environment to be either motivating or demotivating.

WORKING CONDITIONS

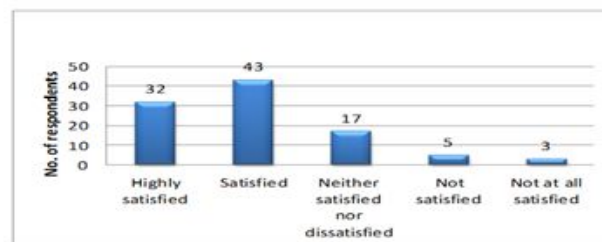


Figure 3: Working Conditions

Interpretation

According to the Figure 3, working conditions provided by the organizations was found Satisfying by 75 respondents, Not Satisfying by 8 respondents. 17 respondents did not state working conditions to be either Satisfying or Not Satisfying.

HARMONIOUS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE COLLEAGUES

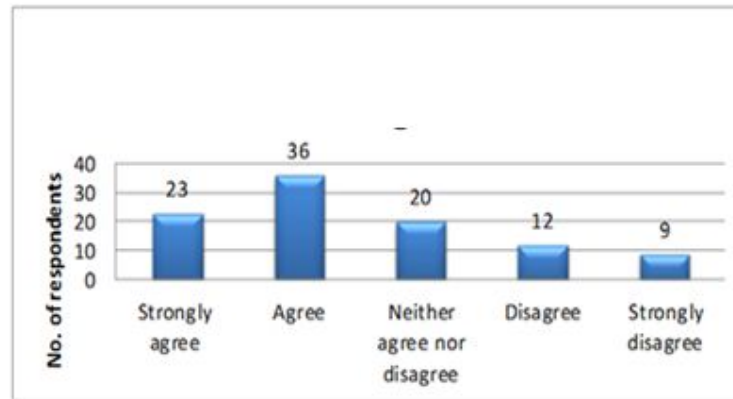


Figure 4: Harmonious Relationship with the Colleagues

Interpretation:

According to the Figure 4, in maintaining pleasant relation with colleagues in organization 23 respondents Strongly Agreed, while 36 respondents Agreed, 12 respondents Disagreed and 9 respondents Strongly Disagreed that their relationship was not pleasant with their colleagues.

SENSE OF BELONGINGNESS

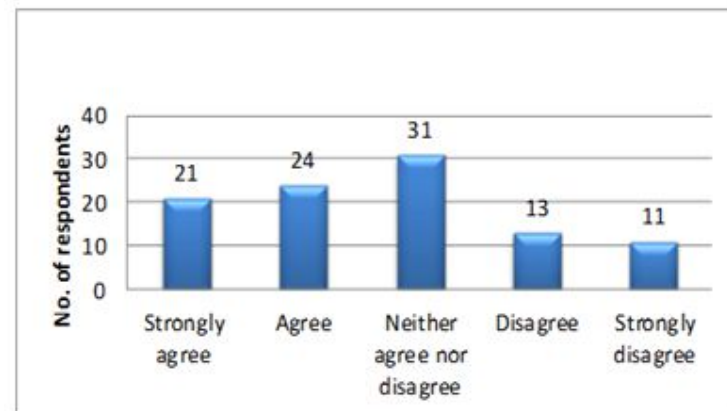


Figure 5: Sense of Belongingness

Interpretation

From the above Figure 5, 21 respondents strongly agree that sense of belongingness increase with the cooperation and 24 respondents agree with the same. While 13 respondents disagree and 11 strongly disagree that the sense of belongingness increases with the cooperation.

ACQUIRING SKILLS THROUGH TRAINING

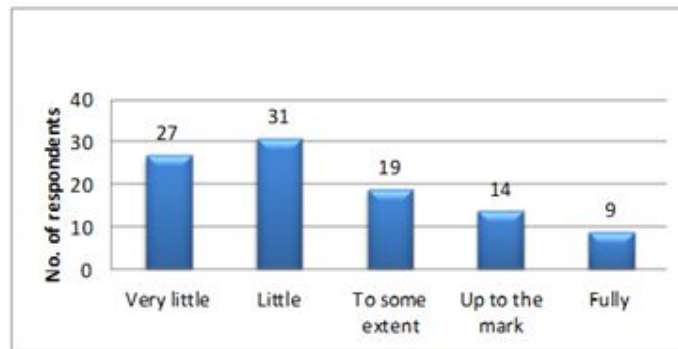


Figure 6: Acquiring Skills Through Training

Interpretation

From the above Figure 6, only 9 respondents feel that the training programs help employees to achieve the required skill for performing the job efficiently. 14 respondents feel that they can help employee perform the job up to the mark. 19 respondents feel the training helps to extent and the 58 other employees feel that there is a little impact of training on the performance.

Quality of Work Life

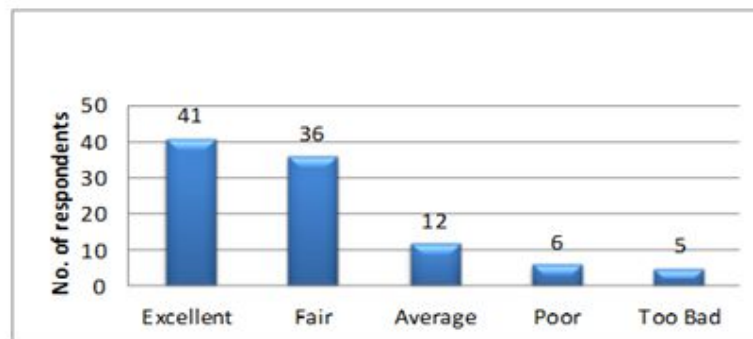


Figure 7: Quality of Work Life

Interpretation

From the above Figure 7, 41 respondents felt that the quality of work life in the organization is Excellent, 36 respondents felt it as Fair, 12 respondents felt it as Average, 6 respondents felt it as Poor and the rest 5 respondents felt it as Too Bad.

FINDINGS

- It was found that a majority of the sample respondents were working with their current organization for more than 2 years. They also felt that their work environment was motivating and they were satisfied with the working conditions.

- It was found that the respondents felt the different departments cooperated and there was harmonious relation between employees. Some respondents felt that increased co-operation does not necessarily create sense of belongingness.
- It was found that the respondents felt that they were given adequate and fair compensation for their work. They also felt that the linking of job performance to rewards is a good step. However, a few respondents did not think so.
- It was found that a majority of respondents felt that their organizations will compensate them on the basis of their responsibilities and what they can do best in particular areas.
- It was found that a majority of the respondents felt that there exists a balance between the objectives to be achieved and the resources provided to them. However, some respondents expressed that resources provided were not adequate to objective fulfillment.
- It was found that majority of the respondents were satisfied with the work-life and were happy about the job and social security provided by their organization.
- It was found that almost all of the respondents felt that the work life in their respective organization was of qualitative nature.

SUGGESTIONS

- The respondents felt a sense of not belonging to the organization and this has its impact on their performance, the overall productivity of the organization. The organization could do well in creating a more open, congenial workplace with greater involvement.
- The respondents felt that organizations should consider the responsibilities of the employee while designing the compensation package.
- The respondents felt that they could perform even better in areas of their interest and organization should consider this aspect.
- The respondents felt that the training programs can be made to be more effective.
- The respondents felt that organizations can improve on employee engagement so as to make the job more satisfying. The organization should take steps should be taken in this direction.
- The respondents in general felt that the Quality of Work Life Balance was good. However some of the respondents indicated it to be average. Organization should attend to this by taking care of such employees to increase their involvement and satisfaction levels.

CONCLUSIONS

This study on Quality of Work Life balance was undertaken in order to gain insights on existing condition in selected IT companies in Hyderabad. The study explored the perceptions of employees towards work and other related issues with respect to their organizations.

Convenience sampling was used to select the sample. The data was collected through interview and questionnaire and also from secondary sources. The same were analyzed using graphical tools and tables.

The study revealed that Work life of the respondents was highly qualitative and they felt the environment to be motivating, relationships among employees and departments to be harmonious, but, responsibilities were not properly accorded appropriate compensation.

It is suggested that organizations create an environment which fosters feeling of belonging. This single factor can go a long way in enriching the work life and creating the required balance. Also, organizations should take cognizance that employees work best in areas of their interest and hence the same can be assessed accordingly.

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